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Joint Research Centre

Accessibility to services in Europe: a closer look at rural areas

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ENRD Workshop on Vibrant Rural Areas: Access to Services
30 June 2020 - Online Workshop



European
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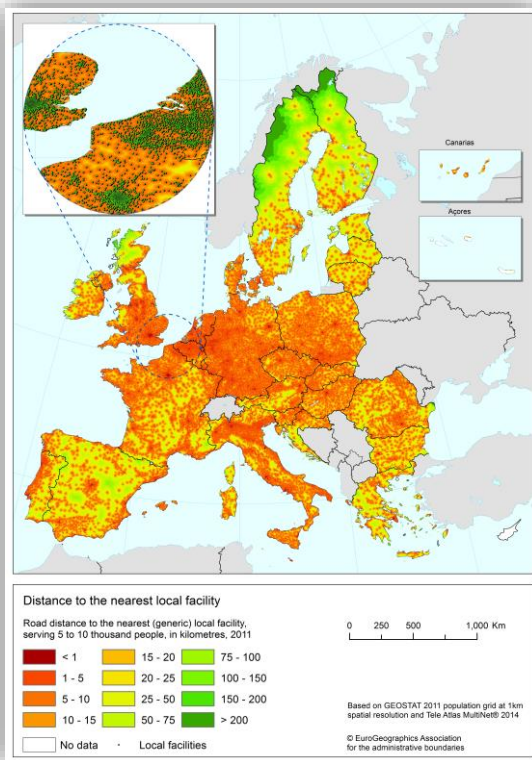
Introduction – I

- Improving accessibility to services is an important goal of many **land use and transport plans** across Europe.
- The provision of **fair and balanced accessibility to services** plays a significant role in
 - reduction of social and territorial disparities
 - decreasing external costs of transport (serving SDG on sustainable cities/energy efficiency)
- With services it is meant, **services used on a daily or weekly basis**, such as
 - education and health facilities,
 - childcare services, cultural and sports facilities,
 - commercial areas for food and goods.
- Unfortunately, comprehensive **data on those facility locations is not available** in Europe (EU-wide).
- This makes it difficult to evaluate the **direct or indirect effects** of policies on service distribution and access to services.

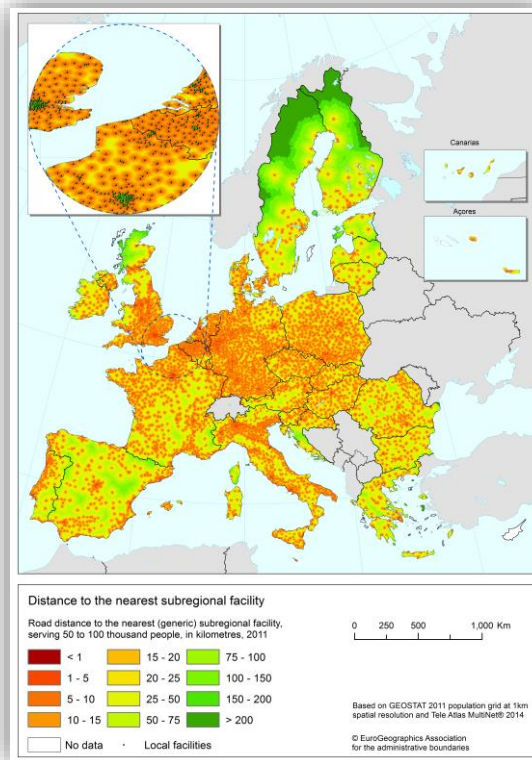
Introduction – II

- At this point, lately we have developed a universally applicable method to measure **generic ('generated' or 'general purpose') service accessibility** in Europe.
 - Defined three types of generic services with different minimum number of users and characteristics: **local, subregional and regional services**.
 - Used a detailed **population distribution** and **a transport network** to allocate 'generic' services across Europe.
 - Reproduced **observed service accessibility patterns** with reasonable accuracy.
- As anticipated, model results show that **cities provide better opportunities in accessing services compared to rural areas** at all three levels.
- In the subsequent slides, a closer look at this **gap between the urban and rural areas** will be provided. For **a wider discussion**, consult the following publication:
 - Kompil, M., Jacobs-Crisioni, C., Dijkstra, L. and Lavallo C., 2019, **Mapping accessibility to generic services in Europe: A market-potential based approach**, Sustainable Cities and Society, Volume 47, 101372, ISSN 2210-6707.

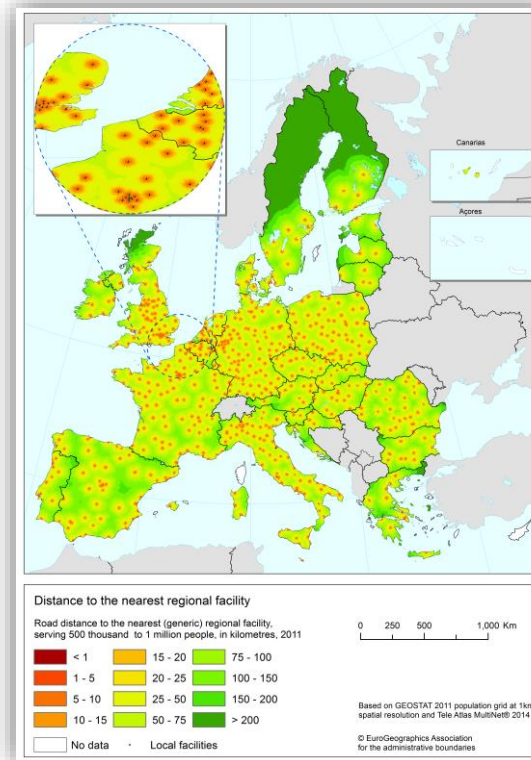
Distance to the nearest facility, at local, subregional and regional levels, by 1 km grid



Road distance to the nearest (generic) local facility serving 5 to 10 thousand people, in kilometres (schools, small health facilities etc.).

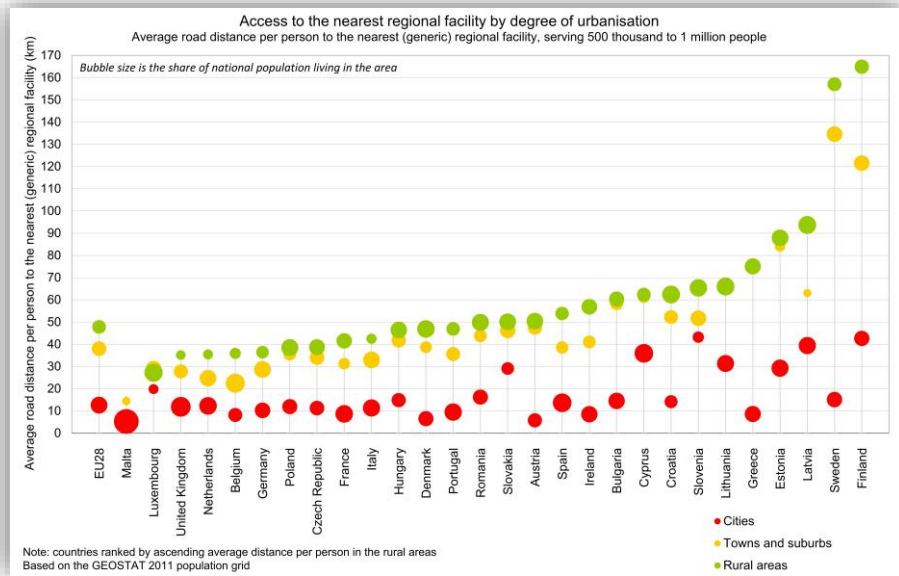
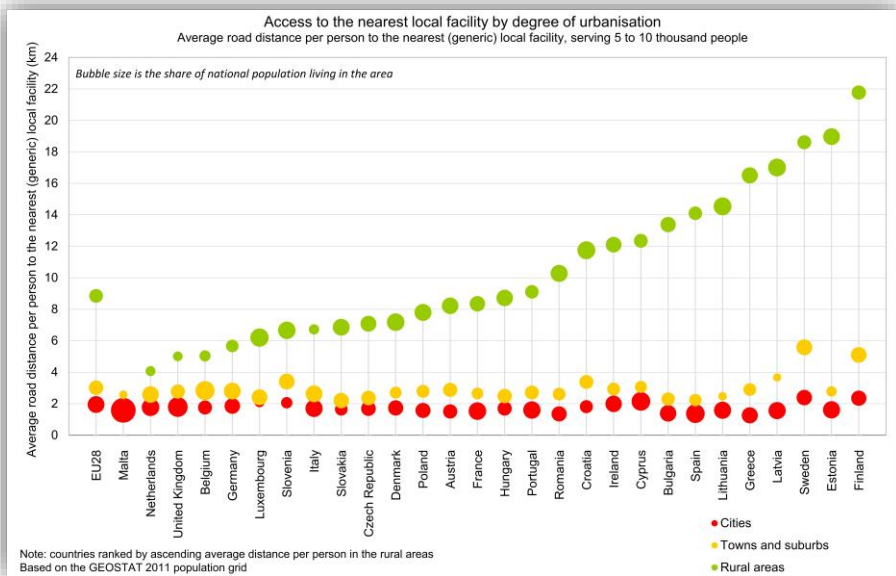


Road distance to the nearest (generic) subregional facility serving 50 to 100 thousand people, in kilometres (high schools, hospitals, supermarkets etc.).



Road distance to the nearest (generic) regional facility serving 500 thousand to 1 million people, in kilometres. (Specialized centres for education and health, large sportive and cultural centres etc.)

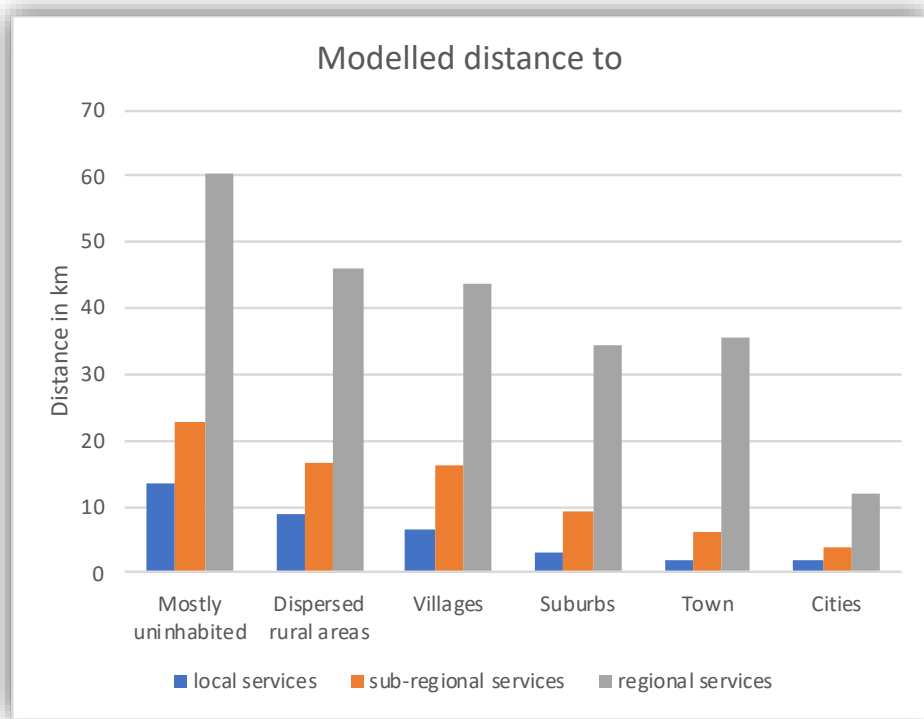
Accessibility to services per member state per degree of urbanisation



Accessibility to services per member state per degree of urbanisation

- An average person living in a city would have a local facility within 2.5 km, while for someone living in a rural area it is 9 km away.
- The gap between cities and rural areas and the variation between rural areas are even bigger when higher-level services are considered (e.g., average distance per person is 35km in the UK and 165km in Finland for regional services).

Accessibility to services by degree of urbanisation level 2



Accessibility to services by degree of urbanisation level 2

With this study, it has been estimated that

- **Four out of five people** in Europe have at least one local or daily service **within 5 km.**
- **One out of four people** in Europe lack a regional or high-order service within **40 km.**
- As shown by degree of urbanisation level 2, **mostly uninhabited rural areas** need to drive **60 km in average** to reach the nearest regional service.

Concluding remarks

- Lower level of accessibility in some of the regions may be an obstacle for **harmonious economic development** or in achieving **high-quality services** for the inhabitants.
- A region may become **economically more attractive and competitive** by being accessible.
- **Being accessible** also ease providing required public and private services such as health and education.
- At this point:
 - accessibility indicators are useful tools to identify **regional characteristics and differences**,
 - can to a certain extent explain **inequalities of regions**, and
 - aid explaining and understanding **urban-rural interactions and linkages**.

LUISA and the Urban Data Platform

- This presentation shares an accessibility study implemented within **the LUISA Territorial Modelling Platform**.
- LUISA is part of the Commission's **Knowledge Centre for Territorial Policies**.
- It evaluates the Commission policies with **direct or indirect territorial impacts**.
- It establishes a comprehensive spatial analysis of **environmental and socio-economic changes** in Europe.
- Find similar LUISA indicators and more at the Commission's **Urban Data Platform**.

Urban Data Platform

The *Urban Data Platform* + is a joint initiative of the Joint Research Centre (JRC) and the Directorate General for Regional and Urban Policy (DG REGIO) of the European Commission. It is a key component of the Knowledge Centre for Territorial Policies and aims at providing access to information on the status and trends of **European cities⁽¹⁾** and **regions**, as well as to the exploration of EU supported integrated urban and territorial development strategies.

The interface features several sections:

- My Place**: A section for exploring a specific location, including a map and descriptive text.
- Trends**: A section for viewing trends across various territorial scales, with a map of Europe and a bar chart.
- Analyses**: A section for thematic analyses, featuring a bar chart and a line graph.
- Strategies**: A section for exploring different strategies, with a map and four donut charts.
- NUTS Converter**: A tool for converting geographical data between different levels (Local, NUTS1, NUTS2, NUTS3).

The future of cities: A section featuring an illustration of a woman in a red hat and a white dress standing in front of a cityscape drawing.

<https://urban.jrc.ec.europa.eu>

<https://urban.jrc.ec.europa.eu/thefutureofcities/>

Thank you for your attention!

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<https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/luisa>
<http://urban.jrc.ec.europa.eu/>

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